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The Big Financial Theft, or the Czechoslovak Currency Reform in 1953 and Its Reflection in the Criminal Legal Sanction of the Participants in the Pilsen Protest Actions¹

Abstract

The currency reform of June 1, 1953, became one of the dark points in the history of the Czechoslovak state. Almost overnight, people's savings turned into a worthless pile of crowns. The regime of the time kept it a secret until the last moment. More than a hundred protests broke out across the country, the largest of which took place in Pilsen. The currency reform, which was being prepared by a team of economists led by Václav Hůla with the help of Soviet advisors, was presented to the population as a blow against the “speculative elements” and a victory for the working people. However, when people first felt its real effects on June 1, spontaneous protests and strikes broke out in many places. The events in Pilsen were the most turbulent. In addition to the West Bohemian metropolis, larger unrest took place in Strakonice, Bohumín, Ostrava and Prague. Many participants in the protests ended up in prison, labor camps, or were sentenced to other forms of punishment. One of the harshest was forced eviction. The State Security, the militia and the army expected some resistance, but they did not expect it to happen in key factories, such as the Škoda Plzeň or ČKD factory in Prague. The biggest impact on society was that the motivation to work, the desire to save and the ability to take care of oneself for a long time was undermined. People's loss of economic self-sufficiency due to actions of the state and the Communist Party, their subjugation to the state and forced dependence on state revenues and state salaries was proof of the state's bankruptcy.

Keywords: currency reform, Czechoslovakia, Pilsen, protest action, repression, state bankruptcy, big financial theft

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Preface

The currency reform of June 1, 1953, became one of the dark points in the history of the Czechoslovak state. Almost overnight, people's savings turned into a worthless pile of crowns. Demonstrations, arrests, trials, and persecution followed.

Introduction – Currency reform in 1953

The economic collapse of the state, caused by the communist economic policy,² was to be averted by monetary reform, which included the devaluation of deposits and the complete abolition of deposits tied up since the previous monetary reform of 1945. The official justification, of course, sounded quite different, and the culprits were both the inconsistency of the reform of 1945 and speculative elements who “enriched themselves at the expense of the working population and accumulated a lot of money in their hands,³ as well as the sabotage activities of the Slánský gang in industry, construction, domestic and foreign trade. It “also caused great damage to the finances and monetary turnover of the state.” Moreover, as Finance Minister Jaroslav Kabeš said, “it was becoming more and more unbearable in external relations for our valuable currency to be tied to the US dollar. It seemed necessary to make it independent and to establish strong ties with the ever-growing economy of the Soviet Union and other countries of people's democracy.”⁴ Perhaps that is why the new Czechoslovak banknotes and coins were secretly produced in the Soviet Union.

And so, despite the fact that the official propaganda denied any possibility of currency reform until the last day, on Sunday, May 31, 1953, the “Resolution of the Government of the Czechoslovak Republic and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia of May 30, 1953, on the implementation of monetary reform and the abolition of food and industrial tickets and goods” was published.⁵

The monetary reform of 1945 did not liquidate the consequences of the fascist occupation and the Second World War in the area of money circulation, it did not state the amount of money tailored to

² Achieving certain goals such as centralization and planning, together with war preparations, required extensive changes in the structure of industry, expansion of heavy industry, construction of a fuel-economic complex, attenuation of consumer industry, production of investment units for the Allies, further nationalization, although also the so-called Communist Party. *The Constitution of 9 May* allowed companies to have up to 50 employees. The economic and violent liquidation of the private wholesale and retail sectors was also detrimental. The mills, hydroelectric power plants, sawmills, etc., which were destroyed by the commissioners of the District Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the ONV only so that they could not be misused “for the enrichment of the bourgeoisie” were not spared. Forced collectivization and the liquidation of kulaks played a similarly tragic role in agriculture. See: Kaplan, *Československo*, 45–54.

³ Kaplan, *Československo*, 54–67.

⁴ Pernes, *Krise komunistického režimu*, 68.

⁵ Act No. 41/1953 Sb., on Monetary Reform. Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, National Assembly 1948–1954, stenographic protocol 76. Hereinafter the English names of regulations are used. The Czechoslovak names can be found in the bibliography.

the national economy, and even less so because tens of billions of crowns were released from worthless fixed deposits in the next few years... Until the victorious February, capitalist elements and speculators in the towns and villages were able, under the protection of reactionary parties, to accumulate profits from industrial, commercial and construction enterprises. Speculative elements... They enriched themselves at the expense of the working population and accumulated a lot of money in their hands. The sabotage activities of the Slánský gang⁶ in industry, construction, domestic and foreign trade also caused great damage to the finances and money turnover of the state.⁷

The currency reform began to be prepared in absolute secrecy on the instructions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in October and November 1952 by a group of economists headed by Václav Hůla (1925–1983), an economist and high-ranking Czechoslovak politician in the 1960s and 1970s.⁸ On May 5, 1953, the division of salaries into advance payments and cash on delivery was stipulated, where the additional payment was to be paid in the new currency, which gave rise to a premonition of a new currency reform. The new organization of the socialist monetary and credit system was completed by a monetary reform carried out on the basis of Act No. 41/1953 Coll. of May 30, 1953, on monetary reform, effective as of June 1, 1953.⁹ In addition to being used in the title of the law, the term “monetary reform” became common in professional circles and in the legal literature because the law not only provided for the “exchange” of banknotes at a certain exchange rate, but also had the attributes of a monetary law. Currency reform was consistent with the logic of a planned economy free of the functions of money, rejecting a free-market banking system and “pre-socialist” savings.¹⁰

The shocking and radical currency reform had official contemporary economic and ideological justifications. According to §1 of the Act,¹¹ the currency reform was carried out “with the aim of increasing the purchasing power of the Czechoslovak crown and strengthening its exchange rate.” Another official justification was an effort to remedy the inappropriately and inconsistently implemented monetary reform of 1945, to liquidate the surplus of currency in circulation unsystematically released from tied deposits, to correct the defective currency issuance policy, to suppress the economic forces of the “reactionary classes,” etc. However, the real, unspoken reason was to economically force the entire Czechoslovak population to accept socialism. The population had to be materially and psychologically at the mercy of the socialist state.¹²

⁶ In the main trial of the second round in Czechoslovakia with Slánský [*et al.*], the entire concept of the first Czechoslovak five-year plan was condemned. Economists who received the highest sentences for allegedly sabotaging the conversion of the Czechoslovak economy into a heavy industry economy were put on trial. These were not only the economists in the trial of Slánský [*et al.*], i.e., Frejka, Frank, Löbl and Margolius, but also political functionaries. See: Kaplan, Kosatik, *Gottwaldovi muži*, 123.

⁷ Rudé právo, Editorial: *Peněžní reforma a zrušení lístků*, 1.

⁸ Václav Hůla (21 July 1925 – 1 April 1983) was a Czech and Czechoslovak economist, politician of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Federal Assembly during normalization and minister of governments of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in the 1960s and 1980s, https://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/V%C3%A1clav_H%C5%AFla (accessed: 9.04.2025).

⁹ Act No. 41/1953 Sb., on Monetary Reform. Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic, National Assembly 1948–1954, stenographic protocol, 76.

¹⁰ Jirásek, Šůla, *Velká peněžní loupež*, 145.

¹¹ §1 of Act No. 41/1953 Sb., on Monetary Reform.

¹² Jirásek, Šůla, *Velká peněžní loupež*, 147.

Act No. 41/1953 Coll. abolished not only the tied deposits of 1945, but also annulled securities, including government bonds issued in 1946 and other values that arose and collapsed under the tied deposits regime even after 1945 until the date of the reform (§7). Savings in passbooks and similar instruments on which savings were accumulated until the day of the reform could not be freely withdrawn, but were progressively recalculated. Wage entitlements and state-recognized pension and social entitlements paid by the state were recalculated at the ratio of 1:5 (§4).¹³ Other conversions were stipulated by a directive of the Minister of Finance. With the exception of 300 Czechoslovak crowns per person, which was exchanged at a rate of 1:5 for new Czechoslovak crowns for citizens who did not employ anyone and were not excluded from the rationing economy, the exchange rate was set at 1:50 for everyone. Deposits in savings books were converted progressively according to the total amount of 1:5 to 1:30 or 1:50. The simultaneous abolition of the rationing “ticket” system, which was not abolished in Czechoslovakia after the Second World War, and the introduction of uniform “free prices,” which was in fact regulated, roughly doubled prices.¹⁴

The new Czechoslovak crown was declared the official new currency, i.e., a legally regulated monetary unit,¹⁵ which was equal to 0.123456 g of pure gold and its exchange rate in relation to the ruble was set at 1.80 Czechoslovak crowns per 1 ruble, and “on this basis the State Bank of Czechoslovakia determines the ratio of the Czechoslovak crown to foreign currencies” (§2 of the Act). The gold content of the Czechoslovak crown in no way meant that Czechs had a gold currency. Rather, it was due to pressure from the Soviet Union which wanted the gold content of the Czech crown to legitimize its gold ruble. It was also a psychological measure intended to “prove” the success of socialism. The legally stipulated gold content of the crown was unrealistic, even fictitious. The socialist State Bank of Czechoslovakia banknotes were state notes in their nature and were not exchangeable for gold directly or, to a limited extent, through another currency, not even the ruble, unlike other currencies, for example, in the Bretton Woods system, and other signs of “gold currency” were missing. The crown was consciously artificially revalued in relation to all foreign currencies, in the amount of 28% to 31% against convertible currencies. The unrealistically set exchange rate of the crown caused problems throughout the socialist period and created price differences between export and import prices.¹⁶

Understandably, a large part of the population was outraged by this “great financial theft.” The situation began to escalate on Monday, June 1, 1953, when angry employees came to work and began to discuss the matter. Debating circles grew into assemblies and there were spontaneous strikes and protests, of which a total of 130 were recorded during the first days after the introduction of the currency reform.¹⁷ Demonstrations took

¹³ §§ 4, 7 of Act No. 41/1953 Sb., on Monetary Reform.

¹⁴ Directive of the Minister of Finance of May 30, 1953, on the method of carrying out the monetary reform, which was issued in accordance with § 10 of Act No. 41/1953 Coll., on monetary reform and in accordance with the resolution of the Government of the Czechoslovak Republic and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia of May 30, 1953, on the implementation of the monetary reform and the abolition of tickets for food and industrial goods.

¹⁵ §2 of Act No. 41/1953 Sb., on Monetary Reform.

¹⁶ Jirásek, Šůla, *Velká peněžní loupež*, 146.

¹⁷ Pernes, *Snahy o překonání*, 14.

place in a number of places in Czechoslovakia, but the biggest unrest broke out in Pilsen. There, dissatisfied citizens, the core of whom were workers from the Škoda factory, controlled the town for some time, including the town hall and the town radio station. The demonstrators spoke for about 10 minutes on the radio and then threw busts of Gottwald, Zápotocký, Lenin and Stalin out of the building, trampled on the Soviet flag and hung a large picture of Beneš in the town hall.¹⁸ The regime deployed armed units of the Border Guard, the army, the People's Militia and the National Security Corps from Prague against the demonstrators. The insurgents could not resist the superior forces for long, so in the evening of June 1, 1953, the communists managed to regain control of the city. In other places of unrest, the armed forces also managed to control the situation. These actions did not go unnoticed by the Communist Party.

Myths also arose concerning the allegedly spontaneous demonstration of workers from the Škoda factory, who in "fighting determination and singing the Internationale" marched through the town to the building of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. The Chief Secretary of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Jan Hlína and a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Ladislav Kopřiva, spoke to them here. The party's information that in the evening hours in the city young people danced "full of joy over another defeat of reaction" is also complete fiction. The Pilsen uprising is also associated with the vandalism of the monument to Tomas Garrigue Masaryk. According to the official communist version, it was torn down by "angry people." In fact, it was smashed in the evening by a special car with a magnetic destruction ball. The Council of the Unified National Committee had to backdate its decision to demolish the monument from June 2, 1953 to June 1.¹⁹

In the following days and weeks, a wave of arrests took place in Czechoslovakia, affecting almost every large city. Most people were arrested in Pilsen, with a total of 650 people arrested and 331 people convicted.²⁰ The repression was not only carried out through the courts, many people lost their jobs and housing. Commissions were set up at the factories to investigate and subsequently punish employees who participated in the demonstrations. More than 1,400 people appeared before the commissions at the Škoda factory in Pilsen.²¹ In his speech on the currency reform, Zápotocký confirmed his reputation as a tough hardliner when he stated: "Regulations and resolutions are not discussed. Party regulations and resolutions shall be implemented."²² A similar commentary, in which President Zápotocký defends the unity and inviolability of the resolution and speaks out against discussion, can be found in his speech to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.²³

¹⁸ Kaplan, *Kronika*, 90.

¹⁹ Štěpánek, *Utajené povstání 1953*, 58.

²⁰ Pernes, *Snahy o překonání*, 15.

²¹ Kaplan, *Kronika*, 91.

²² Pernes, *Krise komunistického režimu*, 92.

²³ *Ibid.*, 93.

1. Political trials in Pilsen

The repression that took place in Pilsen reached great proportions. The investigation of the arrested and the preparation of the trials in Pilsen were entirely handled by the State Security. In the first half of June 1953, its members worked out three variants of the trials. The first counted on a political show trial of 13 people. These accused were described as the most active initiators and organizers from the ranks of former functionaries and members of anti-communist parties, as private capitalist elements, adherents of the American way of life, morally depraved persons, etc. These were Emil Otradovec (former district secretary of the Social Democratic Party), Ilya Nazarkovich (son of a member of the Russian White Guard), Karel Schaffhauser (former Social Democrat), Josef Fencl (tobacconist, one of the founding members of the Union of Friends of the USA 1945), František Vorlovský (until 1949 a sales representative of an American company, imprisoned by the Gestapo during the war), Jaroslav Treml (stagehand), Jaroslav Žižka (member of a deputation at the Unified National Committee demanding the release of those arrested), Rudolf Tomášek (former small businessman), Rudolf Držka (active in the French Foreign Legion), Jan Holeček (former small tradesman), Anežka Krinesová (clerk, daughter of a kulak), Josef Nečas (former National Socialist) and Petr Katter (a machinist who had paintings of Masaryk and Beneš and an English flag at home).²⁴

The second option envisaged a main trial and six subsequent trials, whereas the third option involved a main trial and four subsequent trials. It was characteristic of all variants that the State Security (StB) investigators tried to create some kind of connection between the members of the groups and to construct links between the individual groups, despite the fact that many of the accused saw each other for the first time at the trial. Everything was supposed to give the impression of a pre-existing conspiracy. The trials thus had all the features of monstrous and absurd political show trials.²⁵

A fourth option was ultimately used, which was an extended merger of the second and third variants. Fourteen trials took place at the Regional Court in Pilsen between July 13 and 22, 1953. The sentences ranged from 6 weeks to 14 years. A total of 331 people were convicted, of which 48 were women. Eleven people were acquitted and one person, clearly mentally ill, was placed in a psychiatric hospital. The trials were monitored by Captain Kořínek from the State Security, who sent his reports to Lieutenant Colonel Doubek, one of the most brutal members of the State Security, whose hands were stained by the blood of those executed in previous political trials. Captain Kořínek assured Lieutenant Colonel Doubek that all the defendants were “carefully prepared” for trial in their cells by State Security officers. He praised the fact that there was a minimum of appeals. He considered the cancellation of the trial of Fencl [*et al.*], which was scheduled for July 18, to be the only disturbing moment. After the judge consulted the State Security, this trial was dropped as Fencl claimed that he had been sent to the demonstra-

²⁴ Štěpánek, *Utajené povstání*, 60.

²⁵ AMP, LSP.

tion by the State Security as an agent with signed commitments. He wanted to state these facts during the public hearing.²⁶

The main trials were followed by a wave of secondary trials in district courts. At the end of August, President Zápotocký allegedly intervened in this avalanche, which was supposed to mitigate the sentences to a certain extent.²⁷

Within six weeks, the State Security officers were able to extract the relevant confessions from the arrested, the prosecutor's office obtained the necessary indictments, and the people's court was able to prepare a show trial that was perhaps unparalleled in terms of the pace and number of those tried. In ten days, they managed 15 trials with about 250 people.²⁸

The list of detainees and defendants with brief personal characteristics and brief descriptions of their crimes, prepared by the Regional Prosecutor's Office, contained 298 names. Of these, 256 eventually appeared before the people's court. The defendants were divided into four groups. In the first group there were the instigators and particularly active participants (56 people), in the second group there were active participants (152 people), the third group consisted of participants and bystanders (66 people), and the remaining participants (24) were innocent people identified as persons who had not been proven to have participated. The State Security simply included people they didn't like in this group. Among them were various well-known political figures, especially from the National Socialist and Social Democratic parties. Most of them were released from prison after a few weeks. How many people were arrested in total and punished later or extrajudicially we will never know.²⁹ In individual trials, the People's Court always judged 17 to 20 people at a time; only in two cases were there only 4 defendants. Trials with so many defendants had to take place two times a day. For example, Ilya Nazarkovich remembers that his trial took place at 11 o'clock at night. The trials were, of course, secret, usually allowing the participation of one family member of each accused. Even before the trials, Captain Kořínek wrote that, according to an agency survey in the cells, all the accused were prepared to testify in court according to the so-called truth.³⁰

Under the designation MV.H 193 monetary ref., the regional administration of the State Security in Pilsen prepared a summary report on the course of the trials for the StB headquarters in Prague after the end of the repulsive trial and addressed it to Lieutenant Colonel Doubek.³¹ The report stated that there were no defects during the trials and they were legitimate. All of the accused accepted their sentences. The State Security took credit for this, probably rightly. However, they omitted, for example, the event recorded by Ulč. One worker told the court: "They beat me and beat me and said they wouldn't

²⁶ In the court file of Holeček [*et al.*], the name Josef Fencel appears in the first place in the lawsuit, but this is the only part of the file that deals with this accused. In fact, his name does not appear in the judgment, which is also part of it. See: AMP, LSP, sp. zn. 1 T 145/53, Holeček a spol.

²⁷ Jirásek, Šůla, *Velká peněžní loupež*, 132.

²⁸ Štěpánek, *Utajené povstání*, 62.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ About Lieutenant Colonel Doubek Z. Štěpánek states that he was one of the most notorious investigators in the trials of the anti-state center and others. Kaplan, *StB sobě*, 35–7.

stop until I confessed. I really had no choice but to sign it. I would have signed at that moment that I had killed my own mother.”³²

The rapid proceedings were due to both the court, which had prepared the judgments in advance, and the delegated Prague lawyers, who either remained silent or nodded eagerly. Lawyers from the Pilsen Bar Advice Bureau were not allowed to appear in court at all because one of its lawyers took part in the protests.³³ For the final trial, the court allowed, or rather organized, the presence of about a hundred carefully selected supporters of the regime.

Three hundred and fifty people were arrested and brought to trial; 23 were released or, surprisingly, acquitted, two were even released from custody on the basis of high party intervention. The main wave of trials, during which about 200 people were convicted, took place in July 1953. The rest of the proceedings took place by the end of September, and some defendants were still in the courtroom in October. The smallest sentence was 6 weeks. It was given to a lawyer who was accused of both low social status and the fact that, given his education, he should have known that even simply accompanying a protest procession was committing a crime.³⁴ For verbally advocating the destruction of the monument, a sentence of 7 months in prison was given. An aggravating circumstance for some of the individuals was also the fact that their relatives lived in the United States of America, for example in California. For the statement “Hold free elections and see how many of you are left” the sentence was 3 years in prison. According to the court, the person who said this was still so mentally disturbed that he barely understood the meaning of his words. If anyone resisted arrest, they got about 7 years. One of them, by the way, was a fighter from Dukla. Kottera was sentenced to 14 years in prison for finding a trophy Mauser rifle from the Second World War, which did not fire. Although he was a collector of firearms, he was accused of illegally gathering weapons and preparing for an armed revolution. He served 9.5 years of his 14-year sentence.³⁵ Only about 20 defendants appealed, and the regional chief of the State Security praised in the reports how well prepared the people in the cells were. About half of the convicts were workers aged 18 to 25. It was therefore a real workers’ revolt and this was perhaps one of the reasons why the local representatives of the ruling power hesitated to use weapons in repressing it, for which they were later reproached by the Central Committee.³⁶

In 13 trials, a total of 217 people were charged, including 169 men and 48 women, to a total sentence of 339 years and 4.5 months. The age of the defendants ranged from 17 to 62 years. The most represented age category was from 20 to 30 years (89 persons), 42 accused were aged 30–40 years, 39 were 18–20 years, 9 were juveniles, 27 were 40–50 years old, and 2 were over 60 years old.³⁷ Ten defendants were acquitted. Forty-seven people lost their honorary civil rights, 9 forfeited their property, and 3 were banned from staying in the Pilsen Region for a period of 10 years.

³² Štěpánek, *Utajené povstání*, 62.

³³ It was J. Hegner, Esq., a member of the Lawyer’s Advice Bureau in Pilsen. See: AMP, LSP, sp.zn. 1 T 142/53, Krinesová a spol.

³⁴ AMP, LSP, sp. zn. 1 T 142/53, Krinesová a spol.

³⁵ AMP, LSP, sp. zn. 1 T 153/53, Otradovec a spol.

³⁶ Polívka, “Létalo kamení,” 3.

³⁷ Štěpánek, *Utajené povstání*, 62–3.

2. Extrajudicial persecution

As part of the criminal prosecution of the demonstrators, there was also so-called extrajudicial persecution.

On June 19, 1953, the Ministry of the Interior issued a circular to all the Regional National Committees and the Central National Committee in Prague. It was titled: "Negative attitude of some employees to the currency reform – termination of employment" and included a request that the provisions of Section 20 of Act No. 66/150 Coll. on the termination of employment without notice or similar procedure be applied.³⁸ The letter was signed by Deputy Minister G. Spurný. On the basis of this, a number of employees were dismissed from the Škoda factory. "Thousands of people were affected by the wave of mass persecution: from dismissal from the factory to transfer to unskilled work. For example, 17 machine tool designers were affected."³⁹

A number of the Unified National Committee employees were also affected. Some names are mentioned in Štěpánek's book, including, for example, Ms. Kutmanová who was dismissed because she "incited other employees to participate in the demonstrations," Ms. Vítovská who lost her job because her husband took part in a demonstration (he was sentenced to perform manual labor), and Hožánková. Šorn, a clerk, was dismissed for standing in the town square for 40 minutes. He "approved of the actions of the class enemy" and left the workplace three times. He was subsequently expelled from the party and dismissed. Dlouhá "took a completely hard stance when sending the resolution" and, moreover, came from a family of tradesmen – she was also fired. Dismissed employees received a note in their identity cards saying, "Action June 1, 1953."⁴⁰

After June 1, the eviction of entire families from Pilsen to the border regions began, not only in West Bohemia, but also in northern and eastern Bohemia, e.g., to Broumov. In many cases, they were people who had nothing to do with the demonstration at all. The extent of this action will probably never be ascertained because the relevant documents are missing. They were probably shredded before 1968 since this forced eviction was illegal. It was usually a short and quick process. In the evening, a family received a decree of the Unified National Committee, which was signed by the chairman of the Unified National Committee, sometimes only an official, vouching for its validity. The family was evicted overnight. "All it took was a bad background, or just a little cursing about the situation, sometimes not a respectful enough look at the officials, or just a nice apartment that one of the regime's favorites had his eye on. Objections did not suspend eviction."⁴¹ From the decree of the Unified National Committee, the family learned that the next day at 5 a.m. a moving van would arrive and take the furnishings of the apartment to the border regions, where the evicted were not very kindly received. Everywhere they were looked upon as "enemies of the working class." They were also permanently expelled from the city where they had lived.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 58.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴¹ Martinovský, "Plzeňské události," 22i.

How the operation took place was captured in the reports that the State Security submitted daily until June 9[, 1953]. However, these records only show how many families were evicted. Štěpánek states that there were 100 to 250 families.⁴² Martinovský writes:

Between June 3 and 9, there were 22 families. It could have been over a hundred people. At the beginning of 1954, when the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia again dealt with the evaluation of the work of the party bodies in Pilsen, it stated, among other things, that 180 people had been evicted and a hundred people were appealing against their eviction.⁴³

The eviction to the border region was stopped at the end of August due to the direct intervention of Zápotocký, and at least some of those who appealed the court verdicts received a lesser punishment. However, the victims of the repression of the 1950s did not receive complete justice until after the Rehabilitation Act was issued in 1990.

To commemorate the events of June 1, 1953, the Pilsen City Council declared this date as the so-called Day of the First Ringing, i.e., the day symbolizing the first bell of communism.⁴⁴ Since June 1, 1993, the flags of the city of Pilsen and the Czech Republic have been flown in public places and buildings of the city. In 1993, a memorial plaque was also unveiled on Masaryk Square, commemorating the event 40 years ago.

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⁴² Štěpánek, *Utajené povstání*, 59.

⁴³ Polívka, “Létalo kamení,” 3.

⁴⁴ The second bell rang in 1968 and the third on November 17, 1989.

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